THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) On the basis of the monthly per capita quantities of consumption reported in the National Sample Survey 61st Round Report on "Household Consumption of Various Goods and Services in India, 2004-05" and the population projections given by the Office of the Registrar General of India, the consumption of rice in the country including seed, feed and wastage was estimated at 85.77 million tonnes during 2004-05 which rose to 87.01 million tonnes during 2005-06 and to 88.25 million tonnes during 2006-07. This shows that the consumption of rice is increasing by 1.24 million tonnes every year. Based on the said approach, the country's rice requirement is projected to be 104 million tonnes by 2020-21.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Production of rice depends on a variety of factors including land under the crop, availability of irrigation, weather, fertilizers, quality seed and prices. In order to increase the productivity and production of rice in the country a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas" (ICDP-Rice) is in place from October, 2000. Under the scheme, assistance is provided for propagation of improved/hybrid production technology, integrated pest management, transfer of technology, farm implements, installation of sprinkler irrigation system, varietal replacement and production of certified seeds.

In order to increase the production of rice further, recently a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Food Security Mission" (NFSM) has also been launched in the country from 2007-08. It aims at increasing the production of rice by 10 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Plan, *i.e.*, by 2011-12 through area increase and productivity enhancement in targeted districts.

To check the rise in price of a commodity including rice, the Government resorts to measures like restricting export, allowing import and reducing tariff rates besides announcing remunerative prices and bonuses to the farmers for increasing its availability.

**Special Agriculture Zones**

1185. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a bid to prevent prime farmland from being used for industrial purposes, the Government is mulling to set up Special Agriculture Zones (SAZs) which would provide sustainable relief to distressed farmers;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has already identified 31 such districts in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. There is no such proposal for setting up Special Agriculture Zones (SAZs) for providing relief to distressed farmers in the country. However, Government of India has identified 31 districts falling in 4 States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra for implementation of various programmes relating to watershed development, irrigation projects, supply of inputs, credit, horticulture, rainwater harvesting and construction of check dams to support distressed farmers under Prime Minister's Relief Package, as per details given below:—

| Sl.No. | Name of the State | Districts identified |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | Prakasam, Guntur, Nellore, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Ananthapur, Kurnool, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Khammam, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Rangareddy and Warangal |
| 2. | Karnataka | Belgaum, Hassan, Chitradurga, Chikmaglur, Kodagu and Shimoga |
| 3. | Kerala | Wayanad, Palakkad and Kasaragod |
| 4. | Maharashtra | Akola, Wardha, Amravati, Buldana, Wasim and Yavatmal. |

**Increasing temperature—a great risk for food security**

†1186. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that change in weather, particularly continuous increasing temperature has turned out to be a great risk for the food security of the country particularly production of wheat;

(b) the steps Government is taking to produce seeds to meet this situation in coming times; and

(c) whether Government made any assessment of the effectiveness of GM seeds in tackling the situation of change in weather?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The increasing temperature particularly in the months of February and March could affect the wheat production and risk the food security of the country.

(b) The Government is contemplating to develop crops for better adaptability to changes in weather such as increasing temperature by conventional and biotechnological techniques.

(c) No GM seeds in any crop have been produced so far to tackle the situation of change in weather.

**Investment in agriculture sector by private sector**

†1187. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the private sector is considering to invest in the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether this will help in removing the problems of agriculture sector and improve the quality of agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) As per the data compiled by Central Statistical Organization, the private sector investment measured in terms of Gross Capital Formation (GCF) (at constant

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.